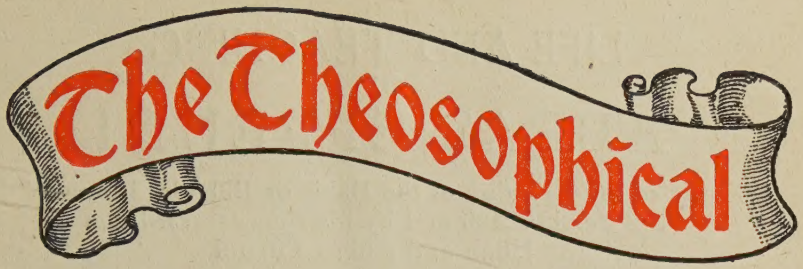

FORUM

OCTOBER, 1904

OUR ARTICLES:

	PAGE
THE MESSENGERS OF THE GODS -	101
A WORD ON SCHOPENHAUER - -	103
BREAD TURNED TO STONE - -	109
ASCETICISM AND PASSION - -	111
A PHASE OF AMERICAN MYSTICISM	116

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THE MESSENGERS OF THE GODS.

There are tidal hours in which the messengers of the gods descend earthwards, bearing gifts upon their lances of light. They gather about the human threshold; they wait, mutely attentive, in a silence which is itself a prayer. They ask but to be seen; their whole purpose and being is in this—to bear to man the gifts of the gods.

The hour is rare and brief: not often does the Divine Law admit of the descent of the powers: man must have called long and often.

Amidst the unseen messengers, man comes and goes over his threshold, his eyes—mayhap his heart—entangled in the glittering web of human life and human endeavour which spins itself out before his gaze. While he delays, the rare hour expends itself: the divine messengers take up their gifts and return to the inner heavens.

Thus human life is again beggared of those sacred possessions it longed for and might in steadfastness have made its own: not again do the messengers descend. And although it is true that the holy gifts exist always in the heaven worlds, stored there for the man who can seek them and make them his own, yet not often is there such rejoicing in heaven as that which arises, exultant, when the strong man ascends to the gods and claims his inheritance. He who has not learned to avail himself of the operations of the laws

of over-nature; he who has not watched for the descent of the messengers; who gives them no welcome at his door, no entreaty to cross his threshold and to quicken the fires of his dwelling—that man has perhaps missed the single sunrise of his present life-time: his heart and his hearth remain cold, bereft of the true flame of life.

And what of the rejected messengers? It is said that denial leaves them passionless and calm; as they came, so they depart. But some among them have seen acceptance, recognition; they have lingered awhile at the hearth they have re-allumined; they have had touch with that human heart whose call had shaken the heavens and called them down. Returning they bear with them somewhat of that strange human essence which has power to compel the high gods at the propitious moment: there is a want felt thereafter in the heavens; and when they have run their course time after, drawn down by that mysterious essence, an hour strikes when they return no more: an awe struck whisper circles among the stars that a messenger has won his humanity.

A WORD ON SCHOPENHAUER.

I remember once attending a drawing-room lecture on Schopenhauer and his philosophy of pessimism, where the audience, as is very often the case when these high themes are treated, consisted almost entirely of ladies.

As the graceful young philosopher, whose outline was clearly marked against a window leading into a charming garden, gradually unfolded his theme, and, bringing one after another joys of life to the balance, found them altogether wanting, his fair and philosophic audience fell deeper and deeper into hopeless depression and melancholy. If the expression were not so hopelessly coarse, I should be tempted to say that you could see those ladies' jaws drop as the philosophy of pessimism was unfolded; but undeniably coarse this expression is, so I had better say that the light died out of their eyes.

I had come in rather late, as one should do to see the lecturer at his best and thoroughly warmed up to his subject, and I could see he had gone so far that his fair audience was ready to renounce the will-to-live on the spot. I shall never forget the thrill of relief that throbbed through the room, when, the lecture ended, I ventured to say that Schopenhauer seemed to me very much misunderstood; for I always thought him a great humorist, only he had not yet been found out. So genuine and visible was the pleasure that my remark called forth, so re-animated became those erstwhile down-cast faces, that the eloquent lecturer never had the heart to ask me to justify my opinion; and the turned tide of feeling carried the whole party gaily in to supper.

And my remark was, I think, not altogether unjustified, not altogether insincere, though perhaps I should have said that Schopenhauer seems to me misunderstood because I find him to be an optimist and no pessimist at all.

In sober truth, Schopenhauer's great achievement in philosophy

has hardly anything to do with pessimism at all, or, indeed with optimism either. In connecting his name with pessimism, the general opinion has made one of those mistakes, due to the heresy of insufficient knowledge, which make one doubt the validity of popular fame. To understand what Schopenhauer really did, one must consider for a moment what point philosophy had reached when he began his work.

We may remember that the starting point of Shankara's philosophy was that the whole of the outward world is a series of phenomena, appearances, things objective to our consciousness, and that this consciousness of ours is the only primary reality we can have knowledge of. This is exactly the conclusion reached by the best philosophers of Europe, from Descartes and Berkeley to Kant. Our certain knowledge does not extend beyond our states of consciousness; this is the conclusion established by Descartes and Berkeley, by arguments which, as Professor Huxley says, are simply unshakeable; and "all materialists who have tried to bite this file have simply broken their teeth."

This was the position of the question when Kant took it up, with that depth and lucidity of thought which make him the greatest philosopher of modern Europe. As the phenomena, the appearances present to consciousness, are not stable, or at best but subject to continual change and variation, Kant felt drawn to postulate some hypothetical outward thing, some external stimulus, which gave rise to these appearances, or, at any rate, which provoke their ceaseless variations; and postulating this outward something, Kant further went on to define what part of the phenomena,—the appearances present to consciousness,—might be assigned to ourselves, the observers, and what part might be assigned to the hypothetical outward something, which he imagined as provoking the sense of change and variation in the phenomena.

It is hardly necessary to repeat Kant's arguments, though they are entirely admirable as an instance of close and lucid reasoning, consistently carried out. It will be enough to state his conclusions. He felt compelled to assign to us, the observers, or rather "intellect"

by which he typified our faculty of observation, three parts in the drama of perception, while one part he assigned to the hypothetical outward something which provoked the variation in our states of consciousness, in the appearances which are present to our consciousness. The three parts he assigned to the observer's share in the drama of perception were time, space, and causality. In other words, Kant said we contributed to the world.-drama the sense of duration, of present, past, and future; the sense of space, the great empty, outer void, in which the varied appearances of the world-drama present themselves; and, thirdly, the sense of the arrangement of these appearances into causal series, or chains of causation, through which each appearance, each phenomenon, is seen as the effect of the appearances which have gone before and as the cause of the appearances which shall follow after. Time, space and causality, Kant said, were the observer's share in the world-drama, and the mysterious outward something which provoked appearances continually appeared to us, not simply and nakedly, as itself, but as distorted and viewed through a triple veil, a veil of time, of space, of causality. And on account of the triple veil of space, causality and time, which perpetually distorted the outer something and broke it up into appearances as we see them, Kant said that we could never know this outer something simply and nakedly, as itself, but must perpetually view it through the threefold veil of causality, time and space. The thing-in-itself, he said, must remain for us perpetually unknowable. We can never know the reality behind appearances, because the distortion of this reality into appearances is an inherent function of our observing power, a three-sided prism, which always breaks up the simple light, a "dome of many-coloured glass that stains the white radiance of eternity."

So far Kant.

Then came Schopenhauer. The great achievement of Schopenhauer was the perception of the fact that this hypothetical outer something, this force that provoked the changing appearances, was not so hopelessly unknowable. Schopenhauer found the outer something, the "thing-in-itself," a hopeless exile in the eternal void. Taking this exile, he brought it home, like a returned prodigal, and made it as one of the household. Kant had cast the blame of three

parts of the world-drama on ourselves, the observers, and left the fourth part, the outer something, the "thing-in-itself," hopelessly unknowable, and out of reach of us, the observers, for ever. Schopenhauer threw on us, the observers, the blame of the fourth part also.

This outer something, this mysterious "force," was, he said, not unknowable to us at all; it was, on the contrary, very familiar and a part of every one of us. For it was none other than that Will which every one of us is conscious of within ourselves. Hence the title of Schopenhauer's greater work, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung,*" "the world-drama, as Will and Representation". The Will being the mysterious outer something, the thing-in-itself, of Kant, and the representation being the three-fold distortion into time, space, and causality, which broke up the one Will into myriad appearances.

This identification of the thing-in-itself with the Will has nothing whatever to do with pessimism, and it is on this great achievement that Schopenhauer's lasting fame will rest. In so far, I think, I was justified in saying that, by speaking of him as, in the first place, a pessimist, Schopenhauer was very much misunderstood. Where, then, does the pessimism come in? Rightly speaking, I think, the pessimism does not come in at all; but, on the contrary, Schopenhauer teaches only optimism, as does also the old philosophy of India. Yet it is easy enough to see where the belief in Schopenhauer's pessimism came in, where the general opinion found its pretext for dubbing Schopenhauer a pessimist.

.The world-drama, he said, is made up of the Will and a perverse tendency to break the Will up into myriad fleeting shadows; or life is made up of the white radiance of eternity, and the dome of many-coloured glass that stains this white radiance. Clearly, then, the ideal condition is the white radiance and not the many-coloured stain; clearly the ideal condition is the Will, in its unity and simplicity, and not the myriad forms into which it is distorted by the veils that we weave ourselves. If then, this is the ideal condi-

tion, the practical aim of every one must be to realize this ideal condition, to free the Will of its myriad distortions, to blend the many-coloured stain of world-life once more into the eternal radiance. And in comparison with the pure Will, eternally self-balanced, the myriad forms that it is distored into must seem hopelessly inferior, the many-coloured stain must seem hopelessly inferior to the pure radiance. And these myriad forms, this many-coloured stain, are nothing but our outward life, the life that concerns us so nearly and so perpetually. But the ideal condition, the white radiance, the pure undistorted balanced Will is the real life "at the back of the heavens", as the Upanishads and Plato both call it, the life of the freed self dwelling in the Eternal.

In comparison with this ideal life, the outward life is hopelessly inferior; and the only sane aim of any man is to change the myriad distortions back to their ideal rest as soon as possible, to turn the Will back from illusory outward life to real inward life without delay. This, then, is the "pessimism" of Schopenhauer, as the general opinion describes it; but I can only see in it the most exultant optimism.

For is it not the assertion of a life of reality that we are all perpetually craving for in this life of never-ending phantasy? Is it not the assertion of a life eternal, above this life of ours, with its perpetual, inexorable change; a life eternal, not needing to be won by the funeral passage through the tomb, nor indeed to be won by that passage, but a life eternal, perpetually present and existent, as the natural and normal order of things, the natural and normal order that we ourselves have perverted and broken up, and to restore which to its white radiance as of old depends only upon ourselves. A "Kingdom in the Heavens" altogether within our power and yet altogether beyond us, for our power served only to distort it and then to remove the distortion, but never to create the Kingdom that is the white radiance of the Eternal.

Such is Schopenhauer's optimist pessimism; and one could not wish us better than that we should become such pessimists ourselves.

I think, then, that I was justified in dispelling, in some sort, the black cloud of despondency that had settled down over the fair audience I have described, even though the means I used were rather effectual than candid.

BREAD TURNED TO STONE.

A philosopher, travelling a certain road, came upon a man sitting amid a pile of stones crying aloud in tones of anguish: "Bread —give bread lest I die of starvation!"

And about him stood many who were handing him loaves of bread in varied form. Some of the loaves offered him were shaped as crosses, some as crescents, some bore the imprint of many thumbs and many were sprinkled with blood. But as fast as the hungry man laid hold of them they each turned to a stone.

"How now!" cried the philosopher, "why is this poor man allowed to hunger?" Then those about him answered: "He hath a devil! We have given him many loaves of good bread, such as we eat and thrive on, but, behold—the devil which possesses him turns each loaf to stone ere he hath eaten, yea—at his very touch."

"Ye poor foolish ones!" exclaimed the philosopher, scornfully. "You do not understand his case. He hath no devil, the fault is with your bread. Let me, then, prepare him a loaf suited to him and he will no longer grieve of hunger."

Then they who stood by answered sullenly: "He hath a devil!" And they departed, leaving the philosopher alone with the hungry man.

Then did the philosopher gather the stones which had been bread and build an oven therewith, and he used sunshine for fire to heat it. Then he called upon the earth, the air and the water for his substance which he leavened with the lark's song. Then he carefully counted the degrees of heat that his oven became not overheated and he placed the loaf therein, saying: "Oh, starving one! Bless this day which gave you such a friend as I. The loaf which I now prepare contains the potent principles of which these poor stones offered thee are but symbols. It will feed thee and thou will forever praise the giver!"

And when the loaf was baked, he gave it to the hungry one and it immediately became a stone.

"Alas, alas!" cried the astonished philosopher, "thou hast a devil, indeed." And he withdrew to a sheltered place to think over night.

Then when the morning had come he returned again to the

starving man expecting to find him dead. But lo—he who hungered was standing in the sunlight singing a morning song.

"How art thou, oh starving one?" asked the philosopher.

"I am no longer hungry," replied the man, "I have eaten."

"Whence came the bread?" asked the philosopher, amazed.

"I made it myself," said the man.

"Tut, tut!" said the philosopher. "Thou *hast* no devil—thou *art* a devil!" And he strode away indignantly.

III

ASCETICISM AND PASSION.

II.

The fall of the first of the human race is understood by the Russian church as a sin against a fundamental law of life: the will of God is or ought to be the one driving central power in all human life and activity, yet Adam and Eve deliberately placed in the center not God's will but their own. Man refused to see in God the beginning and the end of all that is, and proclaimed himself to be autonomous, to have being outside of divinity.

The author of the present article sees in this and this alone the cause of every sinful circumstance man can place himself in.

Original sin has both a negative and a positive side: Man denied the authority of the divine will and by so doing he created a new positive power which we call egotism. The first two of the human race wilfully placed themselves in the center of creation, taking the sole purpose of the latter to be the ministering to their comforts and desires. If man acknowledged himself to be a *creature,* a limited and non-autonomous being, whose one security was his union with God, such an act would be equal to a complete self-sacrifice, which would be but another word for a refusal to lead a separate existence, to have plans and works of his own. In the self-sacrifice lay the possibilities of all his future growth and development, but he chose an autonomous self assertive existence, placing the center of it in the created side of himself, in that side which was limiited and empirical. This negative attitude towards God must be considered as the substance and foundation of all sin.

The following quotation gives a comprehensive definition of what this attitude was: "Man desired to be a god, without God." In other words, original sin was against religion, against the relation between man and God, the moral consequence of sin following in its wake. Blinding lusts could be born and become manifest only after man has proclaimed his self assertive autonomy, rising against obligations God's will imposed on him. "When man fell the harmonious working relations within himself and his true relation to the world outside were all upset."

First of all his love of God grew weak and dim. God was no longer a loving and just father to him, but either a stern pitiless

avenger, or, still worth, nothing but a jealous fellow creature, mighty in keeping all that is worth having away from man. Communion with God was no longer a joyful satisfying of a natural craving, but a loathsome, fearful duty, lest the Outside Power, God had become for man, grew offended and took its revenge. Egotism towards God led to egotism towards everything that grew or lived. By having tasted of the forbidden fruit in the distinct hope of becoming through it "as God is," the first man immediately placed himself in false relation to nature: instead of being a self-supporting free worker incessantly contributing to the accomplishment of the ultimate end, man turned for help towards the material universe, demanding from the latter that it should use its mechanical powers to achieve the end, which was the ultimate destination of man, but which man ought to have achieved through his love and trust of God. By this irrational action man lowered himself to the level of a mere inanimate thing of this world, distorting the meaning of the works of the whole creation.

Man, the being on earth, destined to achieve conscious immortality putting his trust in the temporal, the mechanical, the material —this is the impulse which pushes the whole universe of the visible and the invisible into an abnormal position, destroying the natural order of all things.

When the sense of God became dim in the first human beings, their attitude towards the natural world also grew false. It was man's duty to further the existence of such conditions, as were the best adopted for Nature manifesting her creative power at their best. But man chose, instead, an attitude of animal egotism towards nature, of greed, of lust and often of senseless destruction. Thus instead of supplying to nature principles of harmony and growth, man brings to her nothing but dissonance and ruin.

To quote one of the Church Fathers: "Nature, by an inborn motion, always ascends through the less perfect to the more perfect." The oriental church considers the world to be a harmonious ascent of phenomena, of forces, of things and of creatures on the ladder of strict gradation, which alone makes the world an indivisible organic whole—truly a *Cosmos*.

The chemical and organic biology of all that exists, is to be ruled over, in man, by a new faculty, not possessed by the rest of

the visible creation, a faculty which the Fathers of the Church designate by the term *nous* or *mens*. All the forces of the material irrational nature focussed in man and subjected to this new rational power make of man a *microcosm*.

It is the *spirit* that makes a man a human being. Animals also have a *soul*, and the soul of a man in itself is in no wise different from the soul of an animal. Left to itself the soul will turn exclusively to physical comforts and temporal well being. The soul's cognition is built of empirical observations, its activity is bounded by the instincts of reproduction and self preservation.

But the organic union with the spirit imparts to it some important characteristics, which raise it above the soul of an animal and which are expressed in aspirations, yearnings and faculties. An introspective man can not help observing in his own inner world phenomena belonging entirely to the domain of the animal soul, phenomena belonging to the domain of the animal soul *united to the spirit*, and also phenomena which solely belong to the domain of the pure godlike spirit.

It is the influence of the spirit that imparts to the *cognizing activity* of man a tendency towards perceiving in an ideal light all such ever unsolved and ever fearsome questions as: what is man in his essence, whence does he come, whither does he travel, what is beyond the regions of the starlit heavens? This ideal tendency of man's cognition expresses itself in metaphysics, in all branches of philosophy in general.

The *creative activity* of man in junction with the godlike spirit stops concerning itself with self preservation and reproduction alone and finds expression in a tendency towards a rational mode of life, in seeking the highest good and in adopting to it his whole life. The result of this activity is law.

The *emotional activity* of man's soul, influenced by the godlike spirit in him finds expression in the tendency to seek and realize an ideal of beauty. Hence, besides the pleasant or unpleasant sensations a man experiences in connection with physico—psychic well-being, a set of sensations of a perfectly different order, which the author of the article defines by the term *disinterested* and which are produced by the inborn profound satisfaction a man, in all stages of his development, will find in the harmonious embodiment of the

true and the good in a material form. The result of this activity is art.

But the highest expression, the truly specific characteristic of the godlike spirit in man is in man's inner self-consciousness and self-control, as well as in the tendency for ever to seek that which can have no end and in constant dissatisfaction with everything temporary, everything created. The outcome of this tendency is religion, an inborn yearning to feel God and to please him.

To quote a Father of the Church: "The natural elements of the spirit are the fear of God, conscience, and the thirst of God, which can not be satisfied by anything created." In the innocent man, before the fall, all his needs, tendencies and powers were blended in perfect harmony, the lower serving the higher, the higher regulating the lower, the godlike spirit being master over all. Being concentrated in one undivided individuality, the composing elements of man emanated from the spirit in a harmonious and pliable mutual relation and so all were able to carry out their alotted work. The *spirit* established communion with God; the *body* was a docile and well adapted instrument serving to transmit the will of the spirit into the outer material world, perfecting it in accordance with the ideal, and so in a sense *spiritualizing* matter; as to the *soul* it stood between the spirit and the body, serving as a channel between the two, growing more perfect, in its turn, in the measure of its service and obedience to the spirit. But when, as a result of the fall, man's activity became egotistical, the living bond of love between man and God was broken, and the original order of things was totally upset.

Man placed the center of his life in himself, and not in God. He deluded himself into the belief that the satisfying of his needs and desires was the only object of his life. Hence the transformation of the natural needs, of the faculty to form desires, of all the great variety of human powers which formerly, one and all, were but servants and tools, into something self-subsisting, self-governed and autonomous. It could not be any other way, since they all got into the habit of referring, leading and catering to nothing higher but the personal consciousness of man, which, in its turn, but increased their power by considering them as principles, valuable in themselves, apart from the function they originally were meant to

fulfil. Hence, since the yearning of the godlike spirit for God grew weaker, since its ideal tendencies grew dim and its energising vitalizing faculty grew slack, it could not any more maintain its position of master and controller of the soul and, through the soul, of the body, but, on the contrary, it was dragged down to the level of an instrumental, subsidiary power itself.

To quote a Father of the Church: "Nowadays almost the whole of the man's being is wide awake only for the material; all his cares and eagerness are directed towards it; it forms the object of both his memory and his hope."

(To be Continued.)

A PHASE OF AMERICAN MYSTICISM.

(Continued.)

19. Yea, we believe good works are the foundation of all moral and spiritual progress and virtuous achievement—for without good works, love would fail, and belief and knowledge would be of no avail. Good works are our passport and title deed to the heavenly inheritance. Faith without works is dead, and next to nothing. Works are the fruit and test of faith. No one can have too many of the righteous kind, nor can any one be saved without them. "He that believeth in me, the works that I do shall he do, and greater also." "Work out your salvation." "He shall reward every one according to his works." Character, nor works, are not transferable; both unfold from within. No one can be saved by proxy. Titus ii; 14. Ch. iii; 8. James ii; 24. Col. i; 10.

20. We believe in self-abasement, but not in debasement; in self-denial and self-sacrifice to the full extent commanded,—in patient continuance in well doing, whatever be the trials, afflictions, opposition or hardships we may have to encounter. The terms are equal and alike to all. Without the cross of Christ, and the loss of all things dear to the carnal mind, no power over sin, and no victory over the world. Gal. vi; 14. Matt. xvi; 24-26. Phil. ii; 3. Jon. xvi; 33.

21. We believe God accepts not faces but character. Those who seek will find; to those who knock it shall be opened. God's mercy is infinite as well as His justice, and in the end all wrongs will be righted and justice be done in mercy to every creature that will hold itself in condition to receive mercy. II. Peter iii; 9. James v; 11. I. Tim. ii; 4. Luke xv; 10, 20.

22. We believe that the spirit world is within and around every one of us, and that we make our own conditions there, happy or miserable, according as we obey or disobey the moral and spiritual light shed upon our pathway here. Like gathers to like there, as here, and states and conditions there, and degree of elevation, are determined solely by moral quality. We build and furnish our own habitation in the spirit world, and shall find there precisely what we put into life here. We reap in the present the fruits of past actions continually, but not a full harvest till we go there.

23. We believe that the Gospel is preached to the dead in Hades, or the invisible world, in the season of judgment: Rev. xiv; 6, 7, "that they may be judged according to men in flesh, but live according to God in spirit," as taught by Jesus and Peter, and by the Founders and Seers of our Order. I. Peter iii; 19; iv; 6, and John v; 25-29. Consequently that in the excarnate state, opportunity is given to all for repentance and change of character, by turning from evil to good, and to improve by advance from good to better, and from lower to higher conditions. No one will be denied a fair chance to become a new creation in the heavens of eternal life. But the change is easier made here than there, by such as have sufficient foresight, and the gain is greater, even as it is easier in the end to live free from debt and lay up a little day by day, than it is to live upon borrowing, and then have to make treble exertion to pay it all back at last,—or as it is easier to change the direction of a rill at its source than that of a river at its mouth. And inasmuch as the excarnate spirit is far more active and sensitive than the incarnate, it costs far greater suffering there to become purged from the nature and effects of sins not repented of here.

24. We believe there is some good in all religious denominations, also in people of no religious profession. But that any system of belief which promises mankind happiness without doing righteously and abstaining from known evil, is a cheat, a delusion and a snare. Also that any system of belief, which does not take away sin from the heart and purify the soul and set it free to obey all commandments of God, is but tentative and temporary, and must pass away before the perfect work, which frees the creature from the service of self and the world here and now, purifies and redeems from error, and makes it a new creation in Christ. II. Cor. v; 17, 18. Jon. viii; 32, 34. I. Jon. iii; 6-10.

25. We believe it is right to own God where we find Him, in man, woman or child. He that receiveth a little child in my name, says a Divine Teacher, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth Him that sent me. In every nation under heaven, he that reveres God, abstains from all known evil, and works righteousness, is accepted of Him. And though in duty bound to expose error according to wisdom given us, both in doctrine and practice, we respect every man's sincerity and good intentions, and we cordially approve of every good work. Acts x; 35. Jon. vii; 7.

26. We believe that as God is light, and in Him is no darkness, to be in Him we must keep in the light by having all our works known to His Witnesses, and abstain from works of darkness. I. Jon. i; 5-7. Eph. v; 13.

27. The writer of the foregoing Synopsis believes that the physical body, in addition to being a habitation for the soul, is both a tool or machine for the mind to do its earthly work with, and a chemical laboratory carried on by the vital principle without taxing thought or volition, to elaborate from food, drink and air, the ethereal essences of matter which compose the psychic body to succeed this visible frame, and form the spirit's dwelling till prepared to receive the true spiritual and resurrection body, which is altogether celestial, clear transparency, without mar or defect, on the higher, boundless, perfect and completely emancipated plane of eternal life. The psychic body, by some called the astral, by others mistaken for the spiritual, in which are stored all the fruits of earth life, is still natural, and common to all human natural creatures. But as we rise by spiritual progression from plane to planes higher, we cast off the external coating of the plane we leave and have no more use for it than has the physical body for its worn-out material, which is being constantly thrust aside by fresh supplies of new material moulded to meet the requirements of new uses and new environments. The celestial and eternal body is, at least in part, product of the Divine eternal life, of which it is the instrument. We have heard from the resurrection heavens, that there is no end to advance in eternal life. "For the faithful, God will be creating new heavens for their enjoyment through all eternity." (Mother Ann Lee.) That is, new environments for new evolutions of the inner consciousness. I. Cor. xv; 44. Ch. ii; 9-15. II. Cor. v; 1.

28. We believe the resurrection has no reference to dead matter, but is wholly spiritual, wrought in the soul, and is consummated by walking in newness of life. Rom. vi; 4. I. Cor. xv; 37, 50. Jon. xi; 25. Rev. xx; 4-5. Shall not they know, who have arisen?

29. Though for reasons apparent in the record, the Bible is esteemed superior to most books, we believe that Divine inspiration and revelation are not confined to any book, climate, age, nor race of people, but are given wherever and whenever needed to accomplish a Divine purpose. Acts ii; 17. Isa. lv; 10, 11. Ch. lxi; 11. I be-

lieve the Bible is a record of the purpose and dealings of the Eternal Spirit, to raise a selected branch of the human family (Gen. xviii; 18, 19,) into higher and purer degrees of moral and religious development, till it could produce the perfect man and model Teacher in the person of Jesus, the Nazarene. Isa. xi. Ch. lx; 21. Zach. iii; 8. Jer. xxiii; 5. Ch. xxxiii; 15. Luke xxiv; 27, 47. Thence onward to the formation of a Royal Priesthood, a nation of spiritual Teachers, Saviors, like Jesus, their Elder Brother and Leader. That by their ministrations in both worlds, all families of the earth shall be blessed Oba. 21. Rev. v; 9, 10. Peter ii; 9. Jer. iii; 15. Isa. xxx; 20. Ch. lxi; 6, 9, 10-11. Mal. ii; 7. Jon. xx; 17. Rom. viii; 29. Who are Christ's Elect, the few who enter the straight gate and narrow way, and are chosen from the many called, to be one with him as he is one with the Father, and to sit down with him in his throne, if they be not those Prophets, Teachers and Saviors who follow his example of crucifying unto death, their carnal mind? Phil. ii; 8. Who are the 144,000 virgins who follow the Lamb withersoever he goeth, the twelve times 12,000 sealed out of all the tribes of Israel, who are given authority over the nations, Rev. ii; 26, if they are not these same people, constituting the general Assembly of the Church of the first-born in heaven and on earth? Ho, all ye Teachers and people who wish to know the uplifting, conquering power of the true Christ, and to prosper his cause in the earth for the redemption of human minds from error; come join this Order and live the life that Jesus lived! The Spirit and the bride say come, and let him that heareth say come, and whosoever will, let him take of the fountain of the water of life freely.

30. We believe that Christ is the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God. That he is "The Lord from heaven, a life giving Spirit," with which every true disciple is anointed. That he is the image of the invisible God, and Son of His love. (Gr.) That he is the effulgence of the Father's glory, and the character of His substance. (Gr.) I. Cor. i; 24. Ch. xv; 45, 47. Col. i; 13, 15; Heb. i; 2, 3. That Jesus was the chosen vessel, in and by whom the Anointing Spirit was manifested to the world as the spiritual Bridegroom. Jesus was the first in our knowledge, that surrendered his own will so completely as to be cut off from, and crucified to the life of the world, till this Anointing Holy Spirit became his life, and enabled

him to say, "I and my Father are one. The Son can do nothing but what he sees the Father do. I do always those things that please Him." In this also he is our pattern. Ann Lee was the first woman that to our knowledge, followed this pattern so closely, as to become the manifester of SOPHIA, the Wisdom of God, in the character of the Spiritual Bride in Christ our Helper. The spiritual Bridegroom and the Bride, we regard as the Father and Mother of all children of the New Creation. Jon. xiv; 16, 18, marg., Ch. i; 33. Prov. viii; 20 to 30. Isa. liv. Jer. xxxi; 22. Ch. xxxiii; 15, 16. Mica. iv; 8 to 13. Rev. xii; 1.

31. We do not believe in mysteries that admit of no rational explanation. We do believe in using our reason and unbiased judgment to test all spirits and spirit manifestations claiming our attention; also all doctrines and revelations represented to us as coming from a Divine source. I believe that the New Testament contains more Divine truth and less mixture of human error, than any book of its size written by mortal hands. I. Jon. iv; 1. Luke xii; 57. I. Cor. ii; 15. Ch. vi; 2. Matt. xiii; 11-16-23. Isa. i; 18. "Reason together," not to oppose and confute, but to learn and communicate the truth of life.

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"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

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